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Cirencester Urban District
Council

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

1940

Cirencester Urban District

ANNUAL REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for 1940

FOREWORD

I herewith present the Annual Report for 1940. The birth rate was again a high one. The standard death and infant death rate were all satisfactory. With the exception of measles the infectious diseases were low in number.

REGINALD GREEN, M.D., D.P.H.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	5,844	left
Population (Census 1931)	...	...	...	7,203	
and estimated 1940	...	...	...	10,640	✓
Number of inhabited houses (Census 1931)				1,886	
(end of 1940)				2,980	✓
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£64,893	
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£265/0/3	

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

		M.	F.	Total
LIVE BIRTHS	...	107	96	203
Legitimate	...	102	93	195
Illegitimate	...	5	3	8

Birth Rate (R.G.) 19.2

STILL BIRTHS

Legitimate	...	2	2	4
Illegitimate	...	1	—	1

Rate per 1000 population, 0.47

DEATHS	81	71	152
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Death Rate (R.G.) 14.4

Standard ... 12.8

Number of Women dying in, or in
consequence of childbirth...from sepsis Nil
from other causes Nil

Deaths of Infants under one year of age per
1000 births :

Legitimate, 36 , Illegitimate, 3 ; Total 39

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	19
,, Measles	...	...	Nil
,, Whooping Cough	...	...	Nil
,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)			1

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1940
(REG. GENERAL)

DISEASE				Males	Females.
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	...	1	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1	—
Diarrhoea (under 2)	...	...	...	—	1
Influenza	...	...	...	4	4
Respiratory Tuberculosis	...	...	...	4	3
Other	„	...	...	—	—
Syphilis	...	...	...	—	—
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	1	—
Cancer	...	...	...	6	13
Diabetes	...	...	...	—	—
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	6	7
Heart Disease	...	...	...	16	18
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	3	1
Bronchitis	...	...	...	2	7
Pneumonia	...	...	...	7	2
Appendicitis	...	...	...	1	—
Suicide	...	...	...	1	2
Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	3	1
Nephritis	...	...	...	2	5
Puerperal Diseases	...	...	...	—	—
Congenital Causes, etc.	...	...	...	4	1
Senility	...	...	...	10	5
Other Violence	...	...	...	2	1
Other defined Diseases	...	...	...	7	—
All causes	...	...	...	81	71

CANCER caused 19 deaths against 17 in 1939.

INFLUENZA caused 8 deaths.

BIRTHS.

The births registered, according to the local registrars, were 172, of which 91 were males and 81 females. The return from the Registrar General gave the number of births at 203, of which 107 were males and 96 females. This latter number included births of residents that occurred outside the area, but excluded those of non-residents that were in this district. The latter were, probably, not numerous, but there were 24 of residents in this area that took place in the Tetbury Maternity Hospital alone. Of the 203 births 8 were illegitimate, whereas of the local total there was only one. Only one illegitimate birth of a resident belonging to the district occurred at the Maternity Hospital. Where the other 6 illegitimates were born is not known. The Birth Rate for the year was 19.2 per 1000 population, compared with 20.1 in 1939, and 18.8 in 1938, a steady average for the three years. The Birth Rate in England and Wales was 14.6 per 1000 of the population, varying from 16.0 in the great towns, to 13.7 in London. The quarterly births were fairly even, that of the third being the highest. There occurred 5 still births, all legitimate except one, equal to a rate of 0.47 per 1000 population. The rate in England and Wales was 0.55 per 1000. The Birth Rate is a very satisfactory one, being almost 5 per 1000 greater than the death rate, equal to an annual gain of 53 persons in the population.

DEATHS.

The deaths certified of residents were 152, and of these 81 were males and 71 females. Of this number 13 only occurred outside the area. In 1938 there were 108 deaths, and in 1939 the number was 124, corresponding death rates being 13.2 in 1938, and in 1939 13.4 per 1000. The crude death rate for 1940 was

14.4 per 1000, but the standard rate was 12.8 per 1000. The latter should be compared with 14.3, which is the standard death rate for England and Wales. The death rate for the 126 large towns was 15.8 per 1000, and for the 148 smaller towns 12.8 per 1000. As to deaths at age periods, there were at 0-1 year 8, 1-15 years 3, 15-25 years 1, 25-45 years 14, 45-65 years 30, and 65 years upwards 96. Dealing with causes of death, one was due to cerebro-spinal fever, no death due to that cause occurring in 1939. There was one death from diphtheria, one from diarrhoea, at age under two years, 8 to influenza, and 7 to tuberculosis. Cancer caused 19 deaths of which 13 were women, all aged over 45 years. Apoplexy was certified 13 times, heart disease 34, circulatory complaints 4, bronchitis 9, pneumonia 9 compared with 4 only in 1939, nephritis 7, senility 15, violence 3, suicides 3 as against 1 in 1939. Fourteen residents died outside the district, as to 23 in 1939, many of them at Institutions of various sorts. The number of non-residents certified were no less than 85 compared with 21 in 1939, and, of these, 58 deaths took place at the Public Assistance Institution, and 21 at the Memorial Hospital. The increase is connected with the fact that a number of other Public Assistance Infirmaries in the county have been closed. Fourteen inquests have been held in the district, largely to do with accidents, brought in to the Memorial Hospital from outside.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Eight deaths were certified at ages under one year, 4 males and 4 females, one child being illegitimate. Five deaths were due to congenital weakness and premature birth, one to influenza and one to accidental scalding. The infant death rate was 39 per 1000 live births, compared with 23 in 1939, (a record low rate),

and 55 in England and Wales. Three deaths occurred at ages under one week, 2 at ages under three months, and 3 over 3 months. The male rate was 37, and the female rate 42 per 1000 births, which is unusual, the male rate generally being higher. The legitimate death rate was 36, and the illegitimate rate was 125 per 1000 births, the latter being nil in 1939.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Opthalmia		Dysentery	... 2
Neonatorum	1	Puerperal	
Scarlet Fever	... 28	Pyrexia	3
Diphtheria	... 4	Measles	... 235
Pneumonia	... 22	Whooping	
Cerebro		Cough	8
Spinal Fever	7	Tuberculosis	... 6

Scarlet Fever was more prevalent than last year, there being 28 cases reported as against 19. Five patients were between 1 and 5 years, 16 at school age, and 7 aged over 25 years. There was only one instance of 2 cases in a house, and practically all the patients were treated in the Isolation Hospital. Patients are now treated for a month only, whereas it was at one time a case of 6 weeks isolation, thus saving one-third of the cost. Four cases of diphtheria were notified, 2 women and 2 children, one of the latter, aged 4 years, dying at the Isolation Hospital from croup. One patient was a nurse at this joint hospital, where she had nursed innumerable cases of the disease. Immunisation against this disease has now been started in the county in regard to all the school children and toddlers, and it is probable that the disease will become quite unusual. As in the last war, cerebro-spinal fever has been prevalent throughout the country, and most of the cases are connected in some way with camps and aerodromes. Seven cases were notified, 5 males and 2 females, 4 adults and 3 school

children. Owing to the Isolation Hospital being crowded, it was not found possible to remove all the cases to hospital, and 3 cases were treated at home. With one exception, a young man who died in hospital, all the cases made a good recovery. This complaint is spread by "carriers," and practically not at all by actual cases. They do not have the disease, but have the germs in the naso-pharynx. The treatment of this disease has now been much improved, by the use of a special drug recently discovered. Two cases of bacterial dysentery were reported, one adult, and one school child. This complaint has been very prevalent throughout the country in recent years, but these are the first cases reported here. Three cases of puerperal pyrexia were notified and all three women recovered. One case of infantile ophthalmia occurred, this being due to venereal disease in the parents, at one time a very fruitful source of blindness in the population. Medical assistance in this disease, and in the former one, is supplied by the County Council. Measles became notifiable in November, 1939, when only one case occurred in that year. This year, however, the disease was rampant in the combined areas, including German Measles. Although the latter complaint—a distinct disease—is not compulsorily notifiable, all cases were sent in by the medical profession, and it was quite impossible to distinguish one from the other. Altogether 235 cases were reported, including 123 males and 112 females. This number includes, practically, the whole of several private schools, and most of the juniors in the elementary schools. Only one patient was aged under a year, 45 from 1 to 5 years, 169 of school age, and 20 adults. Showing that many parents did not call in a doctor, the number of cases reported by the head teachers were, from the schools alone, 452, or twice as many as were notified under the Act, of all ages. Probably all these infected households received leaflets of advice, as supplied gratis by a Midland Insur-

ance Company, which were given out by teachers, inspectors and attendance officers. This was done all through the combined districts, which probably accounts for the fact that no deaths occurred from all the 1683 cases in the schools alone. It is probable that Measles will not be seriously epidemic in this area for many years to come. Practically all the patients were treated at home. All the notified cases were in the first six months of the year, which is the time, when this disease, and several similar ones, flourish. Only 8 cases of whooping cough were notified, 3 at ages under 5 years, and 5 at school age. In the 2 months of 1939 there were 13 cases. Reported from the schools were 21 cases, as against 5 school cases from the doctors, showing how many parents did not get medical advice. A Hospital was opened for the reception of cases of measles and whooping cough and other infections occurring among evacuees at Baunton Mill, and has been very useful. The cases reported from the schools occurred in the second half of the year, which is rather unusual, and most of them were from one or two infant schools. Four of the cases reported by medical men occurred in the first four months of the year, and the other four were in December. No cases proved fatal, which suggests that they were well looked after. Few cases of mumps were reported from the schools, only four in fact. There were, however, 99 cases of Chicken Pox reported by head teachers. These cases are usually so very mild that probably many cases attend school throughout the attack without being discovered. Mild cases are as infectious, up to a point, as more severe ones. Scabies, or Itch, attacked 16 children, most of whom were, no doubt, evacuees. The Sick Bay for evacuees in Cricklade Street has dealt successfully with numbers of these cases. The cause of this rather unpleasant disease is a bug which bores under the skin and lays its eggs. Treatment on modern lines cures the complaint in a few days.

PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

The staff is the same as last year, one inspector of nuisances and housing, who is also meat inspector, and a part time medical officer, whose work embraces the East Gloucestershire combined districts. There is no change in the hospital, nursing and laboratory arrangements from the previous year, and the tubercular and venereal clinics are still in being. Arrangements have been made with the Stroud Isolation Hospital for the admission of patients who cannot be taken in at the District Hospital owing to its limited number of wards. There are three hospitals in the town, the Memorial General, the Public Assistance, and the Joint Isolation Hospitals. For special treatment, such as Eye, Throat & Ear and Orthopaedic—this is provided in Cheltenham and Gloucester. The Tetbury Maternity Hospital, under the County, is much used by residents in this area.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

The water supply from Baunton well, in the rural area, still flows as fresh as ever, and the quality is very good, as judged by the regular samples examined by the bacteriologist. Three samples were taken from private wells, and of these, one was not good, and the house was put on to the public supply. There were 15 connections made to the public mains. No new sewers were laid down, the Stratton Sewerage being postponed. The backing up of the outfall sewer in Watermoor district after heavy rains has been made the subject of a public enquiry by the Ministry of Health. No complaints have been received of any nuisance from the sewage works, which are by land treatment. All new drains were tested by water, and, in 8 cases, old drains were tested by smoke, several being defective and replaced. The various streams in the area were inspected on a number of occasions, but no pollution was discovered.

Domestic refuse was, as before, collected twice a week, and deposited at the tip in the Fosse Way. A collection of waste food was begun in September, and it was taken to the Council's yard to be sterilised and afterwards was sold as pig food. Over 19 tons was collected which brought in a revenue of £38 for the 3 or 4 months. For the year ending March 31st, 1941, there was collected in salvage :—

245 tons of Paper,
 $9\frac{1}{2}$ tons of Bones,
 $31\frac{1}{3}$ tons of Rags,
 133 tons of Metal.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

(a) Inspections made under Public Health Act	...	321
(b) Nuisances discovered or reported :—		
Total	... ..	32
Swine only	... ..	2
(c) Complaints received	... ..	67
(d) Informal or preliminary notices sent	... ..	9
(e) Statutory notices sent	... ..	1
(f) Nuisances abated	... ..	32
(g) Summonses issued	... ..	—
(h) Convictions obtained	... ..	—

There were 321 inspections carried out under the Public Health Acts, and 32 nuisances were dealt with, 67 complaints being received. Nine informal and 1 statutory notice were served, and 32 nuisances were abated, by the action of the Inspector. No legal proceedings were found necessary.

SHOPS ACT.

There were 32 inspections under the Act. In one case additional W.C.'s were provided, and a work room had proper ventilation installed.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The inspections numbered 42, and at 5 premises alterations were made to the W.C. provision. The 12 bake houses were inspected regularly, and lime-

washing was carried out at the regular times. Two visits were paid to outworkers premises.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

The conditions of these places is now satisfactory, 34 inspections being made, some in connection with the pasteurising plant at one dairy. Ten samples for bacillary count were taken, two being unsatisfactory. Further samples were taken from two premises, after a consultation with the occupiers, and these were found to be quite clean. Improvements were made in three dairies. Most of the milk consumed is produced in the rural area, which is not tested by the Council.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Twenty-four smoke observations were taken from the chief chimneys in the town, and nuisances occurred in a chimney from a flour mill. After the owner had been warned about it further tests were all normal.

DISINFESTATION.

No bugs were discovered in any houses, but three houses were disinfested in regard to being over run with fleas. There was no recurrence in these houses, none of which were Council houses.

OPEN AIR SWIMMING POOL.

The Council pool has been well patronised. The water is treated by a chlorination plant. A private pool is owned by a local school, town water supplied as necessary.

HOUSING ACTS.

Under the Housing Acts there were 167 premises inspected, this comparing with 100 in 1939. There are no figures of the results obtained by the Inspector

ALL NEW HOUSES.

(1)	Total new houses erected during the year	...	56
(2)	New houses erected during the year with State Assistance under Housing Acts :—		
	(a) By the Local Authority	...	56
	(b) By other bodies or persons	...	Nil
(3)	New houses erected during the year without subsidy		Nil

OVERCROWDING.

This cannot be dealt with under present circumstances, but there is no doubt but that, owing to the influx of evacuees and war workers, a number of the dwellings have more inhabitants than is hygienic. New Council houses erected numbered 56. In 1939 there were 190 Council houses erected, but no non-subsidy houses.

MEAT INSPECTION.

At the two bacon factories there were slaughtered over 62,000 pigs. All the porkers were examined by the Inspector, and about 20 % of the bacon pigs. The Inspector arranged to be called to see any doubtful carcasses of the latter. One pig killed was found later to have had anthrax, according to the report of the bacteriologist. Unfortunately all the meat had been made into sausages, and probably all eaten before the report was received. No case of illness due to eating these sausages was reported, but no unconsumed sausages were ever recovered. The Government Slaughter Houses dealt with 1469 beasts, 8608 sheep, and 554 calves. Out of all these inspections there was condemned, by weight, 64 tons 15 cwt of meat and offals. A notice was received from the Ministry asking all inspectors not to condemn any meat that could possibly be used for human food. Various food preparing premises and fish shops have been inspected regularly, and 16 premises were altered, previous to being registered. No cases of food poisoning, which became notifiable in 1939, were reported.

